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Fatal Seasons

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Recommended Citation

Sibelan E.S. Forrester. (1995). "Fatal Seasons". *Phoenix*. Volume 116, Issue 25. 7-7.

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Arts and Leisure

Non-Swatties Wide-Spread, not Really Panicked at All

By Dan Sachar

When I heard that Widespread Panic was coming to play at Swat, I didn't know exactly what to think. I'll be honest with you, I knew none of their music, but their name conjured up images of thrash metal punks smashing each other to smithereens in a mosh-pit of hell. Then I was given a copy of their latest CD, *Ain't Life Grand*, and new visions entered my head: Tie-dye; free-love; Jerry Garcia ties; long, mellow guitar solos. This mellowness descended on campus last Friday in a concert which turned out to be a lot less of a big deal than people thought it would be.

So, I wake up on the big day, yawn, stretch, open my shades and... AAARGH!! RAIN!!!! The concert that night was supposed to be held outdoors, but Mother Nature had different plans. My vision of Parrish Beach becoming a big Woodstock was eliminated pretty quickly. The entire Thursday before the show, loungers on the beach got to watch the intricate process of setting-up a large outdoor stage. Well, much to SAC's chagrin, that effort was all for naught and most of the buckeroos which went to setting-up that stage were washed away with the rain.

So, the concert was indoors. No big deal. Around 6:55 p.m. on Friday night, I entered Tarble All-Campus Space to find a surprisingly light crowd just hanging around. I also began to notice a lot of non-Swattie invaders. To make sure we got a good spot for the show, my roommate, Bryan Berg, and I ran right up to the front of the stage and staked our positions next to a lot of people we didn't recognize. From the way these people kept saying "Hey, man, we got to get ourselves some beer! Woo-hoo!" I guessed that they were high-school fans of the band.

Yet, these same people went absolutely nuts when Widespread Panic hit the stage and began playing what I found to be a pleasant—but not very thrilling—first set. Apparently, most of the crowd agreed with me and reaction was pretty tame. They were good, to be sure. They jammed, they played some nice tunes, but nothing too memorable. It was later that I found

out that the band was having lots of technical difficulties in the first set.

The second set was a big difference. The band sounded better, the songs were better, the jamming was tighter, and, most importantly, the crowd got into it a lot more. When the show was over, I looked out over the crowd and began to realize just how few Swatties truly attended. This point was best brought home when a friend of mine from my high school who I hadn't seen for years and who now goes to Penn said "hi" to me. Well, the crowd eventually dispersed thanks to the help of Swat Police, Campus Security, and, of course, the Garnet Patrol. Then came the part of the evening I was most looking forward to: hanging out with the band.

The tour manager came to me and told me I could hang with the band, but not to say I was from the press. So, I made my way backstage (Paces) and found the band, a few friends and family, and a few other Swattie fans chilling out and talking. I spent over an hour talking to the band, and here were some of the highlights:

- 1) "I've never heard of Swarthmore, but hey, a gig's a gig."
- 2) The bassist talking about the dangers of computer viruses and the need to protect your files.
- 3) My question to the drummer, who was somewhat, shall we say, out of it: "So, did you enjoy performing here?" His response: "Hrummm...."
- 4) The bassist's parents' reaction to Swarthmore: "People were so nice here, so orderly, not all that beer-drinking and crazy stuff going on."
- 5) And, my favorite, the band's grilling Eugene Sonn on the intricacies of home-brewing beer.

In the end, I had a good time, but I wonder about Widespread Panic. Since all the money was spent for Swat students, and most people there were not, was it really worth it? Should a different band have come? Should the lines of communication between SAC and the student body be opened more so that we can have more of a say in who to bring?

Maybe so, but an event's an event, and even the mellow Widespread Panic was able to bring a little excitement to the campus.

If you know David Plastino '97, then the above police sketch should look uncomfortably familiar. John Doe #2, alias Dave Plastino, is in our midsts and whether because of well-meaning attempts to protect a fellow Swattie or lack of initiative with regards to issues of national security, our community has remained silent. We get what we deserve. Wasn't Oklahoma

enough carnage for one week, Dave? Did you have to once again throw a populace into terror? True, Parrish was a good target; And this is the two year anniversary of your decision to come to Swat. Luckily for us, however, Swat security has been better at crisis management than the Feds, so indiscriminate rounding up of Middle Eastern people in the area is not likely. Give it up Dave. You can run, but you cannot hide.

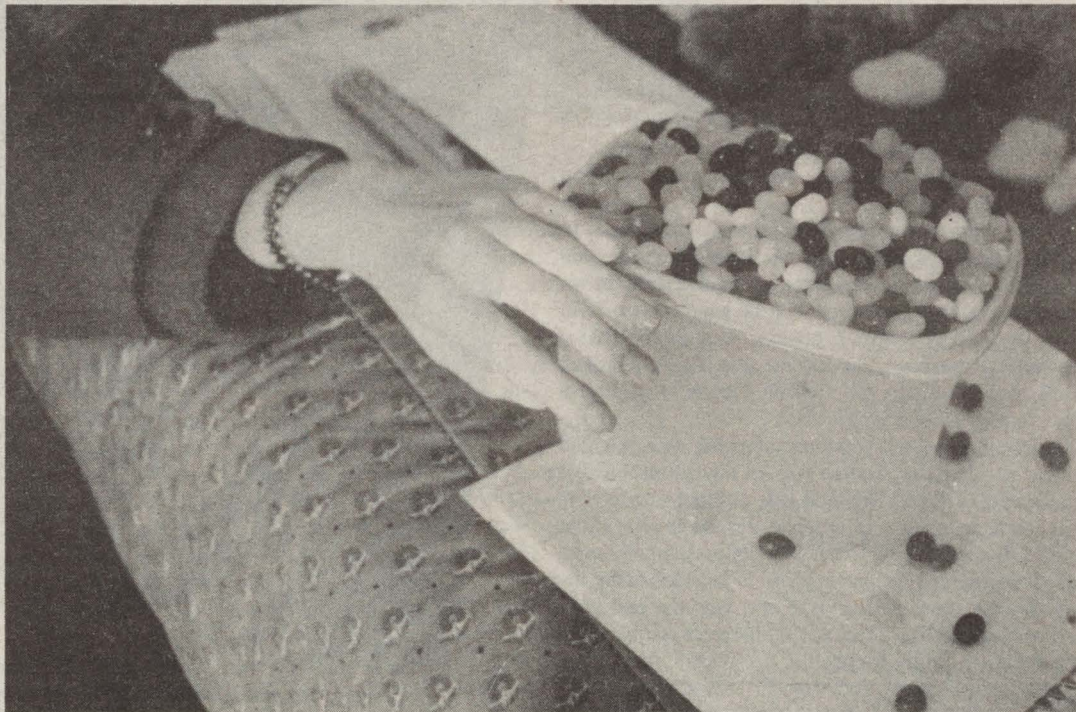


photo by Emily Mindel

Fatal Seasons

By Sibelan Forrester

This is it then: Vikings in our blood
roiling with their red heads.

The winter prayers cower silently
inside green-matted beehive cells.

Will wild invaders steal the gold
of our sunset chasubles, rend them

and melt them down for pagan toys?
Will they spot our lairs and behead us?

They'll do worse than this: they know
to coerce our underground collaboration

out of the lawn: a purple poison cup.
You can't put it down till you drink it up.

Ballroom Steps on Your Toes

Strictly Ballroom stars Paul Mercurio (*Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*) as Scott, a dancer determined to defy the authorities and dance his own steps at the upcoming ballroom dance competition. Even if you haven't seen *Dirty Dancing*, you know where things go from there, especially after Tara Morice shows up as Fran, the clumsy, homely girl who desperately wants to dance with Scott. (Morice even looks like Jennifer Grey, *Dancing's* female star).

Since the plot is so obvious, *Strictly Ballroom* has to get by on style, which produces mixed results. Australian comedies aren't known for their subtlety (think *Young Einstein*) and *Ballroom* isn't likely to change that. It's hideously screechy at times, achieving a kind of desperate camp—which ought to be an oxymoron. The director, Baz Luhrmann, seems to think that the actors' already hammy performances would be even funnier if he put the camera three inches in front of their faces. He's not correct.

There's also an inane subplot involving Fran's Spanish relatives, and the steps that Scott is so eager to dance are actually pretty boring. But Morice and Mercurio make a cute couple, and some of their scenes together are actually pretty sweet. How much you like *Strictly Ballroom* depends on your tolerance for formula and overacting, and your ability to sit through an hour of dreck just to see half an hour of cute stuff.

Strictly Ballroom plays Friday in the LPAC.

You young'uns might not believe it, but Barry Levinson actually made a good movie once. "The direc-

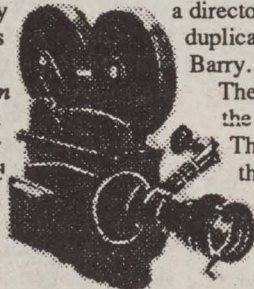
tor of *Toys* and *Jimmy Hollywood*?" you say. "You must be joking." But I'm not. It was called *Diner*. It had good acting, a funny, original script, and a pleasant, low-key style that made it a pleasure to watch. No, really.

All that's irrelevant, though, as the Barry Levinson who makes movies now is a whole different kind of a director, maybe the original Levinson's Bizarro duplicate. "Me make crappy film," says Bizarro Barry. "Me hope it make money."

The new Barry makes movies like *Bugsy* and the object under scrutiny here, *Disclosure*. Those who were offended by the fact that the first major Hollywood picture about sexual harassment was about a man getting harassed by his female boss needn't worry; *Disclosure* is far too incoherent and stupid a film to influence anyone's thinking. The dialogue is wholly moronic, featuring such gems as "But men and women are different!" The acting—well, what would you expect the acting to be like in a movie that stars Michael Douglas and Demi Moore? Moore plays a bitch and Douglas plays a schmuck, so the roles

aren't much of a stretch, but it doesn't help. *Disclosure* starts off offensively enough, with Michael Douglas reprising his role as the Little Bo Peep of white male America, but it quickly degenerates into a generic thriller. Everyone's out to get poor Mikey, and he has to save his butt all by his lonesome. Frankly, having seen *Basic Instinct*, it doesn't look like his butt's worth saving.

Disclosure shows Saturday in DuPont.



Movie Love
by Sam
Adams